

EMIGRATION MEETING TO DISCUSS WORLD POSSIBILITIES. 13/1/38.

Present: Otto M. Schiff, O.B.E., (In the Chair)
 Monsieur E. Oungre (Chairman, Hicem Paris)
 Monsieur B. Melamede (Secretary, Hicem, Paris)
 Dennis M. Cohen, (Jewish Refugees Committee)
 Stephan Jacobi. (Jewish Refugees Committee)
 M. Stephany. (Council for German Jewry)
 Professor N. Bentwich. (Council for German Jewry).

The Chairman thanked Mr. Oungre of Paris for attending the meeting; and stressed the importance which he attached to the meeting as he felt that it is essential that discussions should take place on the whole question of Emigration possibilities to the different countries especially to avoid overlapping.

The Chairman referred to his visit to New York and the deeply regretted death of Felix Warburg. He stated that there was naturally a certain amount of confusion which had arisen after Mr. Warburg's death as he had been very much interested in the German Jewish problem. He had been present at two meetings of the Reconstruction Corporation and came to the conclusion that there was far too much overlapping. The Chairman gave as an example the fact that the Corporation had sent no less than three representatives in one year to the Argentine, in which country there were already representatives of the Hicem and the Ica at Buenos Aires both of which bodies were fully aware of the situation. A German representative had also been sent out and also Mr. Borchardt. The Chairman thought it was unnecessary to investigate again the possibilities in the Argentine, probably at the expense of other countries which might offer opportunities. After having discussed the matter with Sir Osmond d'Avigdor Goldsmid the Chairman had suggested that there should be a joint meeting in London or Paris and that the American Committee should send delegates. The American Committees at first suggested that they might send someone in February but later hoped that the European Committees would first draw up some programme and inform them of the exact decision agreed upon. The Chairman's view was that the matter could best be dealt with by the people who do the actual work rather than by a Committee of 20 people, who probably would not have any knowledge of the problem itself. This is the purpose of the present meeting.

S U R V E Y. The Chairman suggested that the London Committee deal with the British Empire and possibly one or two other countries. The Hicem in Paris would look after certain parts of the Globe and the American Committees other parts.

re: GERMAN INVESTIGATORS. The Chairman stated that he had spoken to two Consuls on this question and he now felt that it was not desirable to send out German Investigators. The fears of the Governments in question were aroused as they might feel that it would mean an enormous influx of German refugees and he personally felt it was far preferable to send an English, an American or Frenchman.

Mr. OUNGRE, referred to the long standing wish of the French Committee to discuss the whole question with persons who were dealing with the problem practically. Speaking for the French representatives they were grateful for this opportunity although that co-operation he felt had always existed.

He referred to the fact that Mr. Louis Oungre was at present in New York and would make Emigration possibilities one of the main topics of discussion with the American Joint Distribution Committee and Refugee Economic Corporation. All the large organisations are ready to co-operate. Much depends on the American Committee as they give a large part of the money for this problem.

Re: German Investigators. The French Representatives agreed about this question but M. Oungre felt that he should mention the following. They are preparing two men to go out to Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela. One a German from Barcelona and the other a German Lawyer, and one of these men when in Colombia was to act as organiser of the Committee.

The Chairman stated that he felt that the first investigator should not be a German. Such a person would probably have to discuss matters with Government officials. The Chairman then suggested a systematic survey of the World.

ABYSSINIA The Chairman reported that a few weeks ago he was approached by a prominent man who had been in Italy. During this visit to Italy this gentleman had met a prominent Senator who gave him to understand that the Italian Government would welcome German Jews for small industries. Possibly artisans but not agriculturalists, as most parts were impossible for agriculture.

MR. OUNGRE. His would be willing to investigate Abyssinia. Chairman. When Mr. L. Oungre returns from America this investigation should be put before him, as he felt that the political relationship between France and Italy was not so strained as that between England and Italy. Mr. Oungre might get in touch with Italian Senators.

Mr. Jacobi. Reported that he had read unfavourable reports to the effect that businesses run on co-operative lines were ruined mainly through Government interference.

The Chairman was of the opinion that a certain number of German Jewish business men might be settled.

Mr. Oungre was of the opinion that well selected families as in the Argentine could be placed, but they would possibly require credits for which a large sum should be deposited.

Mr. Dennis Cohen thought it essential that a certain amount of agricultural settlement should be arranged. It pleased the Governments in question if it were found possible to settle agricultural families. Other people could follow these agriculturists and possibly settle in other trades. An agricultural scheme should not be abandoned.

Mr. Oungre stated that although conditions had been different in the Argentine, 250,000 persons had been settled in this way and had made immigration easier.

ALBANIA. Mr. Stephany reported that the German Committee were investigating possibilities. He had been in touch with a Mr. Leo Elton of London who had suggested that he would go out at his own expense and report on conditions in that country.

Mr. Oungre stated that the American Ambassador in that country was Jewish and had stated that there were few opportunities.

The Chairman asked that full information should be obtained.

It was agreed that the Committees concerned with this problem should keep each other informed of all detailed information received.

IRISH FREE STATE. Mr. Stephany reported that he and Mr. Bentwich were in touch with various people and hoped to interview someone from

Ireland this week end.

Mr. Dennis Cohen was of the opinion that only highly skilled artisans were required and reported that he had taken up this question with Lord Duncannon of the High Commissioner's Office who was unable to do anything at the present time.

Mr. Oungre reported that the Hicem had heard that it was possible to place 6 to 10 Jewish families in small farms with the help of the Jewish Community.

Mr. Stephany stated that the only Jewish Communities in Ireland are in Dublin and Cork.

LUXEMBOURG. Mr. Oungre reported intense Nazi activities and re-emigration of Refugees.

Mr. Jacobi stated that he had received similar information from a personal friend.

JUGO-SLAVIA. Mr. Oungre stated some capitalists might be placed in that country. He further reported that the Hicem have a representative in Zagreb, from which town he would control the problem in Jugo-Slavia. Dr. Wischnitzer had informed him that there were certain possibilities and the Hilfsverein were sending a German specialist to investigate possibilities. It was decided that the Hicem should investigate possibilities.

TURKEY. Mr. Oungre stated that a Bill to expatriate Refugees was rejected. 30 professors had been placed in Istanbul, but nevertheless the Hicem's experience from their Jewish settlement which they have near Constantinople proved rampant Chauvinism in that country. The Hicem still have land near Constantinople which could be utilised. However, Turkey does not desire German immigration. The Hicem's correspondent, a Lawyer, will make further enquiries.

ALGIERS. Mr. Oungre reported that the situation was similar to that in other French Colonies. French Guinea, the climate was unbearable, and therefore impossible for immigration.

Madagascar. Mr. Oungre reported that Malaria and other diseases abound. He further reported that the French Government would never allow German immigration, as this would probably raise a political problem, at a time when Colonies were being discussed in connection with Germany.

North Africa. The French Government will not permit Jewish Immigration as they fear that the same difficulties might arise as in Palestine.

Mr. Melemede. reported that no German Jews were allowed to attend Agricultural Colleges in France and could possibly settle in France, but not in the French Colonies.

It was decided that the question of French Colonies should be held in abeyance.

The Chairman. reported that Mr. Dennis Cohen would be in charge of the British Empire.

BELGIAN CONGO. Mr. Oungre reported that owing to Climatic conditions settlers had had to return to Belgium. However, the Hicem would make

further enquiries.

EGYPT Mr. Oungre reported that some nurses and specialists had been placed. There was little hope of further settlement owing to proximity to Palestine, and the existing political situation.

It was decided for the time being that no further steps should be taken.

LIBERIA. Mr. Dennis Cohen stated that he was of the opinion that there were no possibilities.

MADEIRA. Mr. Oungre stated that as this was affected by the War, it should not be considered.

DACAR Mr. Oungre reported that the Hicem were investigating possibilities. He thought only the Port was suitable at the present time but possibly the Hinterland might prove suitable for Immigration later.

SPANISH MOROCCO. It was decided that this country was not suitable.
SUDAN. Mr. Dennis Cohen referred to a discussion he had had with the Chairman a few months earlier. He reported that there is a certain chance for a business man with capital willing to establish himself, and possibly go into partnership with an Englishman. The main trade at present was with the Natives. Mainly Czechoslovakian and Roumanian goods were imported. No doubt the British Government would welcome the introduction of English Produce.

Mr. Jacobi stated that as far as he knew trade was mostly in the hands of Greeks and Armenians and Japanese goods were imported and were more competitive than English Goods for this type of petty trade. Mr. Chairman reported that he would write to Sir John Maffey, the late Governor of Sudan regarding possibilities.

TANGANYIKA. It was decided that it would be extremely difficult to settle German Jews in view of the possibility of this Colony being returned to Germany.

UGANDA. Further information to be obtained.

ZANZIBAR. No possibilities.

ARGENTINE. Mr. Oungre stated the Hicem were even at the present time still optimistic concerning the opportunities. Their representatives are on good terms with the Government and in fact persons who were deported from Brazil had been granted permits for the Argentine.

Regarding pocket money for the journey out it was decided that the emigrants should be given a few pounds for necessary expenses and the overseas committee informed that a sum up to £10-- would be sent to them for individual cases, rather than the emigrant be given this amount on departure.

Mr. Dennis Cohen stated that in his view £100 including fare was not a large sum to enable a person to start life anew in a fresh country.

Mr. Stephany stated that this view was not shared by the Council for German Jewry.

TIPPING. It was also pointed out that it was necessary to give emigrants sufficient pocket money for the journey in order to enable them to give the necessary gratuities to the Stewards.

BOLIVIA. Mr. Oungre reported that he had discussed the possibilities with Mr. Hochschild when he was in Europe but Mr. Hochschild stated that although he had provided employment for a few immigrants and was still anxious to help he could not see further opportunities for new emigrants.

BRAZIL. Mr. Stephany read the last report from the J.N.C. but Mr. Oungre stated that this information was not absolutely accurate. He had heard from Mr. L. Oungre from New York that new laws for Brazil were being promulgated. Some immigrants will have to leave immediately as they entered the country illegally. Mr. Oungre further suggested that this country be left in abeyance as the Canadian American Joint are being kept informed of the situation and will take active measures if necessary. However, emigration to Brazil should be suspended for the time being.

BRITISH WEST INDIES. No opportunities for Doctors. The Chairman suggested that the American Committee should be asked to get in touch with the United Fruit Company regarding opportunities.

TRINIDAD. Mr. D. Cohen reported that Professor Bentwich had approached Lord Bearsted in this connection. The Chairman thought the best approach might be through a Mining Company and will take up this question with the Central Mining Company.

CANADA. Mr. Oungre reported that agricultural conditions were extremely difficult. Intending settlers should be interviewed by the Hicem who are fully aware of conditions.

Prof. Bentwich discussed 5 families whose particulars had been sent out to Canada to Mr. Paul of the Committee.

Mr. Oungre stated that Mr. Paul had resigned and suggested that all particulars of these families be sent to Hicem.

The Chairman asked whether there might be more opportunities in western Canada than Eastern, and suggested, Manitoba, Alberta, Edmonton etc. The English Committee are pursuing enquiries in Western Canada.

CHILE. Mr. Oungre reported that the Hicem had endeavoured to emigrate 50 families. They still have some visas which had not been utilised.

It was decided that if suitable candidates are found, a communication is to be sent to the Hicem.

ECUADOR. Mr. Oungre reported that a Mr. Selwer from Switzerland will shortly be investigating the possibilities in that country.

GUATEMALA. It was decided that this country should be discussed in about three weeks time as the Hicem are to make investigations, especially with regard to agricultural possibilities.

URUGUAY. Mr. Oungre stated that although there might be certain possibilities some persons were being repatriated.

DUTCH EAST INDIES. The Chairman suggested that the Amsterdam Committee be asked to make enquiries.

Mr. Melemede reported that settlers were returning to Holland.

FEDERATED MALAY STATES. The Chairman suggested that he would get in touch with Mr. Fletcher who is going out to Singapore next week and would possibly make enquiries regarding possibilities.

INDO CHINA. Mr. Oungre suggested that the Hicem would obtain new information.

POLAND. Professor Bentwich was of the opinion that one or two further intellectuals might be placed. No opportunities for artisans.

CYYLON. The Chairman reported that Captain The Hon. Lionel Montagu was leaving during the next week and suggested that the address of Sir Sydney Abrahams, the Chief Justice should be sent to Mr. Montagu. Mr. Montagu will make enquires regarding possibilities.

INDIA. The Chairman reported that Mr. E. Turk's brother-in-law who is at present in Bombay is investigating opportunities. He would ask this gentleman to continue his investigations.

RUSSIA. Lord Duncannon had sent a report that Doctors were being repatriated.

AUSTRALIA. Mr. Oungre stated that to prevent overlapping he wondered whether the Committee for Polish Immigration could be amalgamated with the Committee dealing with German Immigration. The situation in Poland was desperate.

The Chairman suggested that the problem of Polish Jewry should be discussed with Sir Samuel Cohen during his visit to London.

Mr. Dennis Cohen gave a short resume of German emigration to Australia and agreed that the question of Polish Jewry should be held in abeyance until Sir Samuel Cohen was in London.

The meeting was adjourned, but it was agreed that similar meetings should be held three or four times annually, and the hope was expressed that at least once a year American representatives might be present.

Council for German Jewry: Minutes. 13 Jan. 1938. TS Archives of
the Central British Fund for World Jewish Relief, 1933-1960 21.